



Best Practices to Prevent COVID-19

Guidance for Hosting Large Events

For the latest version of this guidance, please check
<http://publichealth.lacounty.gov/media/Coronavirus/reopening-la.htm>.

Updates 8-19-21:

- Reflects recent changes to the Health Officer Order, which (effective 8-19-21) requires all individuals aged 2 years and older, regardless of vaccination status, to wear a face mask in all indoor public settings; this includes concourses and concession stands at outdoor event venues.
- Customers or guests who are actively eating or drinking indoors must be seated at a table or positioned at a stationary counter or place. "Actively eating or drinking" refers to the limited time when customers are permitted to briefly remove their mask to eat or drink, after which it must be immediately put back on. The customer must wear a mask whenever they are not actively eating or drinking, such as when they are waiting to be served, between courses or drinks, or while seated after finishing the food or drink.
- Updated to reflect the change to the State definition of "Indoor Mega Event" from 5,000 attendees or more to 1,000 attendees or more.
- Public Health recommends that for indoor dining, establishments require full vaccination of customers rather than a negative COVID-19 test result.

Given the continuing increase in community transmission of COVID-19 and the growing presence of the more easily spread Delta variant of the COVID-19 virus, masking in all indoor public settings, venues, gatherings, and public and private businesses and at outdoor Mega Events, regardless of vaccination status, is essential to slowing the spread of COVID-19 in the community. The Delta variant of the COVID-19 virus spreads much more easily than strains of the virus that circulated in LA in the past.

Below is a summary of requirements and best practices for businesses that host large events to enhance safety for their workers, customers, and communities, and lower the risk of COVID-19 transmission within their establishments. These requirements and recommendations apply to operators of all large events, not just mega events. In addition to this information, please remember:

- Businesses and venues that host indoor events with more than 1,000 attendees or outdoor events with more than 10,000 attendees must follow State [Guidance for Mega Events](#). Please note that the directives in the LA County Health Officer Order must be followed when they are more stringent than the State Guidance such as the requirement that operators of outdoor Mega Events require all employees and attendees over age 2 to wear face masks while at the event except when they are actively eating or drinking.
- Requirements for employees are different than those for attendees. Employers must follow the [Cal/OSHA COVID-19 Prevention Emergency Temporary Standards](#) (ETS) and the LA County Health Officer Order. Please note that the directives in the LA County Health Officer Order must be followed when they are more stringent than the Cal/OSHA ETS.

Please be sure to read and follow the [general guidance for businesses](#).

The specific best practices below are intended to supplement the general guidance.



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Follow mask rules for employees and attendees

- ✓ **Higher Risk Settings:** Places that serve food and beverages to customers indoors are considered higher-risk settings because persons, both vaccinated and unvaccinated, are indoors, often without face masks, for an extended period of time. Public Health offers the following actions to enhance safety and lower transmission risks at venues that serve food to the public. Food and beverages are often served and consumed at Mega Events.
 - ✓ Mega events are also higher risk for COVID-19 transmission because attendees are spending long periods of time physically close to large numbers of people they don't usually interact with, thereby increasing the risk that respiratory particles will be transmitted between attendees and participants.
- ✓ **Attendees:** All persons attending indoor and outdoor Mega Events are required to bring and wear masks, regardless of vaccination status, when they are at the event except while **actively** eating and drinking in designated areas. Attendees must also wear masks at outdoor events when they enter indoor areas, such as restrooms, restaurants, retail shops, concourses, or concession stands, even if the event is not large enough to be considered a Mega Event.
 - ✓ Masks must be worn except when customers are actively eating and drinking. When actively eating and drinking indoors or at outdoor Mega Events, customers must be seated or positioned at a table, counter, or other stationary location. "Actively eating or drinking" refers to the limited time during which the mask can be briefly removed to eat or drink, after which it must be immediately put back on. The customer must wear a mask whenever they are not actively eating or drinking, such as when they are waiting to be served, between courses or drinks, or while seated after finishing the food or drink.
 - ✓ To enhance safety and lower the risk of transmission in indoor food or beverage service areas consider the following:
 - For indoor food or beverage service, use indoor spaces as much as possible for persons that provide verification of their full vaccination status. Seat those who do not verify their vaccination status outdoors whenever possible.
 - See additional suggestions for indoor ventilation, business signage, and indoor spacing of customers below.
- ✓ **Outdoor Live Events:** To enhance safety and lower the risk of transmission at large outdoor events, operators of outdoor Mega Events must require all attendees and staff, regardless of vaccination status, to wear masks while at the event. For all other large outdoor events (those with fewer than 10,000 attendees) it is strongly recommended that unvaccinated attendees wear masks when they are in crowded outdoor settings and when they are in sustained close contact with others whose vaccination status is not known. Additional recommendations:
 - ✓ Provide masks at large crowded outdoor events for those who are unvaccinated and arrive without them.
 - ✓ Require customers to wear masks at concession stands if they are ordering or picking up food and/or beverages; provide masks at concession stands to those customers that are not masked.

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- ✓ **Employees*:** All employees, regardless of vaccination status, are required to wear masks when working indoors, in shared vehicles, and at outdoor Mega Events. Masks need not be worn indoors if the employee is alone in a room or actively eating or drinking. Public Health strongly recommends that all employees who are eating or drinking indoors be spaced at least 6 feet from other persons.
 - ✓ Upon request, employers are required to provide unvaccinated employees with the correct-size respirator along with basic instructions on how to use the respirator. Respirators must be replaced if they get damaged, deformed, dirty, or difficult to breathe through. For more information about free and low-cost PPE for businesses and organizations visit: <http://publichealth.lacounty.gov/docs/FreeAndLowCostPPE.pdf>.
 - ✓ Employees who work in a setting where they are in close contact with other people who may not be fully vaccinated should be encouraged to wear a higher level of protection, such as "double-masking" (wearing a cloth mask OVER a surgical mask), or a respirator. This is particularly important if the employee is not fully vaccinated and is working in an indoor setting, in a crowded outdoor setting, or in a shared vehicle.
 - ✓ Consider requiring staff to also wear eye protection in addition to a respirator if they are not fully vaccinated and have frequent close contact with others, in particular in the food and beverage service areas where customers are actively eating or drinking.
 - ✓ Performers or presenters must wear face masks indoors and at outdoor Mega Events except when performing a task that cannot feasibly be done while wearing a mask. For ongoing productions, test not fully vaccinated performers and any crew working closely with others at least once before the production and then two times per week for the duration of the production. See [screening testing guidance](#) for more details.
 - ✓ See the [Los Angeles County Health Officer Order](#) page and the [Cal/OSHA Emergency Temporary Standards](#) page for more information about mask requirements. Please note that the directives in the LA County Health Officer Order must be followed when they are more stringent than the Cal/OSHA temporary standards.

* Some independent contractors are considered as employees under the State Labor Code. For more details, check the California Department of Industrial Relations' [Independent contractor versus employee](#) webpage.

Screen attendees

- ✓ Screen guests, staff, performers, and crew for symptoms¹ before they attend the event and ask them not to attend if they have symptoms of COVID-19 or if they are under isolation or quarantine orders.
- ✓ Consider requiring all guests to attest that they are either fully vaccinated² against COVID-19 or will have had a negative COVID-19 test within 72 hours of attending your event.

¹ Symptoms may appear 2-14 days after being exposed to the virus and may include: fever or chills, cough, shortness of breath/difficulty breathing, new loss of taste or smell, fatigue, runny or stuffy nose, muscle or body aches, headache, sore throat, nausea or vomiting, or diarrhea. This list does not include all possible symptoms of COVID-19. Some people with COVID-19 never get symptoms. Visit ph.lacounty.gov/covidcare to learn more about what to do if you are sick.

² You are considered fully vaccinated against COVID-19 two (2) weeks after: the second dose of a Pfizer or Moderna COVID-19 vaccine series, a single dose of Johnson & Johnson COVID-19 vaccine or you finished the series of a COVID-19 vaccine that has been listed for emergency use by the World Health Organization. See [fully vaccinated](#) web page for more information. If it is less than 2 weeks after your second or only dose, you do not have enough protection from the COVID-19 virus. It takes time for your body to build immunity. Continue to take prevention steps until 2 weeks have passed.

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Reduce crowding, especially indoors

- ✓ Establish procedures to prevent crowding among persons waiting to enter or exit an event.
- ✓ If there will be a presentation or performance, maintain at least a 12-foot distance from performers and audience members unless there is verification that everyone is fully vaccinated. Place any unvaccinated performers that sing, yell, or play wind and brass instruments at least 12 feet away from others.
- ✓ Follow [DPH Food and Beverage Service recommendations](#) if you serve refreshments at your event. Dining outdoors is best. If indoors, it is recommended that you have a separate area in your venue for drinking and dining to minimize mixing of people who are not wearing face masks. Diners must be sitting or standing in a stationary place or in their ticketed seat while eating or drinking.

Support handwashing

- ✓ Place handwashing stations or hand sanitizer at entry and outside communal bathrooms with signage promoting use.
- ✓ Encourage frequent handwashing.

Ventilate

- ✓ If your event is held indoors, make sure your building's HVAC system is in good, working order.
- ✓ Maximize ventilation. Options include installing portable high-efficiency air cleaners, upgrading the building's air filters to the highest efficiency possible, and making other modifications to increase the quantity of outside air and ventilation in all working areas.
- ✓ When weather and working conditions allow, increase fresh outdoor air by opening windows and doors. Consider using fans to increase the effectiveness of open windows – position window fans to blow air outward, not inward.
- ✓ Decrease occupancy in areas where outdoor ventilation cannot be increased. Consider use of carbon dioxide monitors to monitor the effectiveness of your ventilation in more densely occupied indoor spaces.
- ✓ If your event is held indoors and has performers that will generate aerosols (such as singers or musicians playing wind or brass instruments) take the following steps:
 - ✓ Assess the direction of the air flow in the room to determine where the air is exiting the room. In buildings with HVAC systems, this will be the air-return vents; if doors or windows are open, check the direction that the air is flowing.
 - ✓ During performances (including rehearsals), position aerosol-generating performers closer to the locations where the air is exiting the room.
- ✓ See State [Interim guidance for Ventilation, Filtration, and Air Quality in Indoor Environments](#).

Communicate

- ✓ Assign staff to remind attendees that they must wear a face mask at all times when indoors at large events or in all areas of the venue when attending an outdoor Mega Event, except when they are actively eating or drinking.

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- ✓ Use advanced registration as much as possible for your event so you know how many people will attend. Advanced registration can also help you to convey your COVID-19 safety plans to guests before they attend.
- ✓ Use your online platforms to communicate your COVID-19 safety policies to the public, including the requirement that all attendees must wear a face mask while indoors or when attending an outdoor Mega Event.
- ✓ Make sure all guests are aware of and follow the Los Angeles County Department of Health [Travel Advisory](#).

